

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 26, 1999

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 21, 1999

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—1999–2000 REGULAR SESSION

## **Assembly Concurrent Resolution**

**No. 32**

**Introduced by Assembly Members Honda, Migden, and  
Shelley**

**(Principal coauthor: Assembly Member Nakano)**

**(~~Coauthor: Assembly Member Machado~~)**

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Dickerson, Ducheny, Dutra, Firebaugh, Florez, Frusetta,  
Gallegos, Granlund, Havice, Hertzberg, House, Jackson,  
Kaloogian, Keeley, Knox, Kuehl, Leach, Lempert, Leonard,  
Longville, Lowenthal, Maddox, Maldonado, Margett,  
Mazzoni, McClintock, Olberg, Oller, Robert Pacheco, Rod  
Pacheco, Pescetti, Reyes, Romero, Runner, Scott, Soto,  
Steinberg, Strickland, Thompson, Thomson, Torlakson,  
Vincent, Washington, Wayne, Wesson, Wiggins, Wildman,  
and Zettel)**

**(Coauthor: Senator Johnston)**

March 23, 1999

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Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 32—Relative to the  
Japanese YWCA in San Francisco.

## LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 32, as amended, Honda. The Japanese YWCA in San Francisco.

This measure would declare that it shall be state policy to eradicate any vestiges of the racism of the California Alien Land Law that was repealed in 1956, and to take steps to ensure the enforcement of charitable trusts created in response to that law.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, The California Alien Land Law was  
2 enacted in 1913 in an atmosphere of racial prejudice and  
3 barred Japanese immigrants and their charitable and  
4 religious organizations from owning real property; and

5 WHEREAS, In response to the California Alien Land  
6 Law, Japanese Americans legally entered into trust  
7 agreements with non-Japanese to hold their property in  
8 another's name so they might establish their roots in this  
9 country and build a stable and lasting community; and

10 WHEREAS, Japanese immigrant women of the Soko  
11 Bukai, an association of Japanese Christian churches in  
12 San Francisco, established a Japanese YWCA in that city  
13 in 1912 to work with Japanese women and girls; and

14 WHEREAS, The San Francisco YWCA policy in the  
15 early 1900's forbade Japanese and other minority women  
16 and girls from living in their residence halls, and this  
17 discriminatory policy was adopted, enforced, and  
18 periodically reaffirmed by the San Francisco YWCA; and

19 WHEREAS, The Japanese YWCA, in response to this  
20 discriminatory policy, undertook a fundraising campaign  
21 to purchase a building that would serve as a residence hall  
22 for Japanese women and girls; and

23 WHEREAS, In 1920–21, the Japanese YWCA raised the  
24 funds to purchase the building and property, with the San  
25 Francisco YWCA Board agreeing to hold this property in  
26 trust for the permanent use of the Japanese YWCA; and

27 WHEREAS, Ten years later, noted architect Julia  
28 Morgan donated her services to design a new Japanese  
29 YWCA building as a tribute to the architectural heritage  
30 of Japan; and



1 WHEREAS, In 1932, the Japanese YWCA celebrated  
2 the opening of its building at 1830 Sutter Street in San  
3 Francisco and continuously and exclusively occupied,  
4 controlled, and provided services to Japanese women and  
5 girls from that building; and

6 WHEREAS, Programs and services of the Japanese  
7 YWCA were abruptly ended in 1942 when Executive  
8 Order Number 9066 forcibly removed all Japanese  
9 Americans from the West Coast to inland concentration  
10 camps; and

11 WHEREAS, The Japanese YWCA leased the building  
12 during the internment years to the American Friends  
13 Service Committee, which provided services to Japanese  
14 American internees; and

15 WHEREAS, Institutional memory of the trust  
16 agreement was lost during the four years of internment  
17 and the years that followed, with the Japanese YWCA  
18 never regaining control of their building; and

19 WHEREAS, The Japanese YWCA building is the only  
20 surviving prewar building constructed through the  
21 efforts, dedication, and vision of Japanese immigrant  
22 women and is their legacy to the Japanese American  
23 community; and

24 WHEREAS, In 1996 the San Francisco YWCA  
25 threatened the existence of the Japanese YWCA building  
26 by (1) attempting to sell the property at its highest  
27 commercial value , (2) rejecting the Japanese American  
28 community's request that the San Francisco YWCA  
29 honor the trust established by the Japanese immigrant  
30 (Issei) women , and (3) rejecting the community's good  
31 faith offer to purchase the Japanese YWCA property to  
32 preserve it for community service; and

33 WHEREAS, The Soko Bukai, whose Issei women  
34 members founded the Japanese YWCA, today reasserts  
35 the Japanese American community's claim to the  
36 Japanese YWCA building; and

37 WHEREAS, The San Francisco YWCA steadfastly  
38 disavows the existence of the trust agreement with the  
39 Japanese YWCA in spite of the minutes of the San



1 Francisco YWCA Board of Directors from the 1920's and  
2 1930's which document that agreement; and

3 WHEREAS, The San Francisco YWCA refuses to  
4 acknowledge any legal or moral obligations to the  
5 Japanese American community and has taken overt  
6 actions to prevent any enforcement of the trust  
7 agreement; and

8 WHEREAS, The San Francisco YWCA's refusal to  
9 honor the trust agreement and fulfill its duties as trustee  
10 allows the YWCA to profit from the racism of the  
11 California Alien Land Law; and

12 WHEREAS, The actions by the San Francisco YWCA  
13 are in direct contradiction to the YWCA's official  
14 imperative "to seek the elimination of racism wherever  
15 it exists and by any means necessary"; and

16 WHEREAS, The California Alien Land Law was ruled  
17 unconstitutional in 1952 and repealed by the California  
18 Legislature in 1956; now, therefore, be it

19 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the*  
20 *Senate thereof concurring,* That the Legislature of the  
21 State of California declares that it shall be the policy of the  
22 state to eradicate any vestiges of the racism of the  
23 California Alien Land Law and to take steps to ensure the  
24 enforcement of charitable trusts created in response to  
25 that law; and be it further

26 *Resolved,* That the Legislature pays tribute to the  
27 contributions, tenacity, and vision of the Issei women  
28 pioneers of the State of California; and be it further

29 *Resolved,* That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly  
30 transmit copies of this resolution to the Governor of the  
31 State of California, the State Library, the State Archives,  
32 and to the author for distribution.

